

**SPECIALLY URGENT THIS YEAR IN VIEW OF THE SUBVERSIVE
PLAN FOR S. INDIA CHURCH**

"Ut omnes unum sint"

THE ANNUAL CALL

OF THE

Church Unity Octave

In collaboration with the C.U.O. Committee in America.

**EIGHT DAYS OF PRAYER
FOR CATHOLIC REUNION 1956**

**From the Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome, January 18th to the Feast of the
Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle of the Nations, January 25th.**

*"I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one:
that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst
them even as thou lovedst me."*

S. John xvii, 23.

It is only by the reunion of all Christians into the Visible Kingdom of Christ, preserved in Unity by the Chair of St. Peter, the central See of Christendom at Rome, that the will of Our Lord can be fulfilled and that the power of the Church can be directed, without the present waste and rivalry, to the conversion of the whole world by One Faith to Christ our King.

It is with a sense of urgency that we send forth the Call to the faithful to observe with devotion the Church Unity Octave of Prayer for union with the Holy See. The Catholic Revival from its beginning was recognized by friend and foe as a Papalist movement, and its objective to be the amendment of the Schism of the XVI Century and the restoration of the ancient and canonical relationship of the Church of England with the Apostolic See.

That great leader in the Church, Lord Halifax, said in one of his last utterances (and none had better right to say so than he) "Let us remember that nothing less than the reunion of Christendom and the healing of the deplorable schism which so grievously affects the relations of the Anglican Communion with the Holy See, is the consummation of the work of the Oxford Fathers." It is to advance that object that the promoters of this Octave ask at this time for your Masses, your prayers, your alms and good works.

The need too is now urgent for a great effort to revive enthusiasm for the cause of Catholic Unity; for the Revival is being diverted from its true end. Much talk of Reunion by our authorities is in the air: let it stop there! Their concept of what union involves is totally different from that which the observance of this Octave has in view. We yield to none in our desire to see all Protestant sects reconciled to the Church, but to enter into relations

with them while they still remain in their particularisms and refusal to accept the full Catholic Faith may result in a federation; but that cannot constitute true unity as the Catholic Church has always understood it. Our Divine Lord prayed for the unity of His Church "As Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee that they also may be one in Us." That is that there may be in the Church as in the Godhead an entire unity of nature—and it is restoration into that supernatural unity for which we pray in this Church Unity Octave.

It should be clearly grasped what this involves. As there is an identity of mind in the Godhead so there must be an identity of faith in the Church. This is why we ask of all those who desire to associate themselves with us in the great prayer of the Octave that they accept as axiomatic the fact that Catholic Unity can only be attained by full dogmatic agreement. Even to seek for it on any other basis is to court failure. Acceptance of the Faith is a condition precedent to prayer or work for the amendment of the schism and for a return to Catholic Unity.

But it is precisely this which is not being accepted. A vague sentimentality is being substituted for clear thought as is evident from the recent resolutions in Convocation. Never has such a theory of episcopacy been held in Christendom that the episcopal Order could be bestowed upon men who refuse to accept the Catholic Faith and were resolved upon promoting and perpetuating schism.—As it has been put "consecrated into deliberate Schism," Such is the case with this strange new sect called the Church of South India. It is mere superstition to regard such as possessed of valid orders, merely on the ground of tactual succession, despite the declared denial of formal acceptance of belief in the Sacramental nature of Holy Orders: so contrary is this to all Catholic Faith and Order. No part of Catholic Christendom could admit their validity and no mere Provincial Convocation has any right or power to assert that it does.

This scandal goes to show into what dangers of condonation of heresy and schism we can be led as long as we remain in our isolation. **Nothing is secure.** There is no guarantee that essential truths will not be sacrificed to attain to Pan-Protestant federation, and that steps will not be taken which would render any prospect of Corporate reunion unattainable. The need therefore is urgent that those who love the Catholic name in the Church of England shall bend all their energies to recall the Catholic Revival to its true end. The Anglican hierarchy is claiming authority in matters of Faith: an authority which cannot be theirs while they remain separated from the rest of the Catholic Episcopate.

If all the energy and zeal and such willingness of adaptability, which have been put into the manipulation of the South Indian affair, had been shown instead for the amendment of the schism between us and the Holy See, how near by now the end of the schism would have been brought! How much greater a good would have been effected for the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men by such zeal than by giving to a heterogeneous collection of Protestant dissenters an Episcopate of doubtful validity which very many of them do not want and in which few truly believe! For us who keep this Octave, no other course apart from secession, is open than a complete refusal to implement, and a repudiation of the resolutions of Convocation. We stand where the Church of England has hitherto stood, and so we deny that a Provincial synod has canonical power to bring us into any sort of Communion with the new sect in South India. We refuse to admit any of its ministers to our altars. A thousand priests accept the doctrinal basis of this Octave, and very many more reject the Convocation resolutions. If so large a minority co-operates and refuses to implement them, then these deplorable proposals can be made of no avail. And surely they will, for all that we most value is at stake.

So we look again unto the Rock from whence we were hewn and we issue this call for the observance of this Octave with redoubled fervour. We pray that all Christian people "rejecting all divisions may join the true shepherd," whom our divine Lord appointed to be the centre of the unity of His church on earth : Unity so supernatural and divine a thing that it is like unto the unity of the Godhead. We pray that the world seeing it may believe.

The Dogmatic Position of the Church Unity Octave Council is summarised in the following statements or Premisses :—(as in previous Calls).

- (1) The conversion of the world depends upon the Visible Unity of the Church of God, for our Saviour prayed, "That they all may be one . . . that the World may believe."
- (2) He provided the means for the maintenance of this Unity by the appointment of a visible head of the visible Body : "Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church." History has shown what interpretation the Church has given to this text, for none other has ever been the Church's acknowledged head upon earth but he who sits on Peter's Throne. Separation from this centre of Unity has always led the separated into further schisms, while acknowledgment of it by all must necessarily result in the healing of all divisions.
- (3) The dogmatic decrees that concern the supremacy of St. Peter's successor and his infallibility in Faith and Morals, while not capable of being rescinded even by the Pope himself, do nevertheless admit of elucidation and further definition such as would make their general acceptance by the Catholic-minded inevitable.
- (4) Further, it may be hoped that many vital and important matters left over at the Vatican Council, such as those concerning the mystical nature of the Church, will eventually be considered and issue in such definitions as may bring out the true balance of the doctrine concerning the relationship between the successor of St. Peter and the rest of the Apostolic Episcopate and the body of the Faithful.

It is to these statements or "premisses" that we invite all Priests to send in their signatures on the enclosed postcard, (unless already signed).

(Numbers only will be published.)

DAILY INTENTIONS

- 18th—The **Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome** The Unity of all Christians and Peace of the world.
- 19th—Reunion of the Separated Eastern Christians.
- 20th— „ „ „ „ English Christians.
- 21st— „ „ „ „ Christians in Europe.
- 22nd— „ „ „ „ Christians in America and the Commonwealth.
- 23rd—The Conversion of the lapsed.
- 24th— „ „ „ „ Jews and Moslems.
- 25th—**Feast of The "Conversion of St. Paul.** The Missionary conquest of World to Christ the King.

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